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Farm Broadcasters Letter



Letter No. 2302

March 5, 1987

WHEAT EXPORT FORECAST

The latest U.S. wheat export forecast for 1986/87 was increased by 1 million 400 thousand tons to 27 million 900 tons - 5 pct. higher than a month ago and 12 pct. above a year ago, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This upward revision reflects a rapid pace of recent Export Enhancement Program sales and anticipated sales under this program to Eastern Europe, North Africa and China.

EXPORT FORECAST... CORN

The U.S. corn export forecast by the U.S. Department of Agriculture for 1986/87 remains unchanged at 28 million 600 thousand tons, 2 million 900 thousand below last year. Despite low corn prices during the past month, there are indications of a modest turn around in the outlook for U.S. corn exports. The principal causes appear to be the sharp fall in exportable supplies of Argentine corn and the competitive price of U.S. corn. This has led to a pick-up in Japanese and S. Korean commitments for the purchase of U.S. corn in recent weeks. The uncertainty regarding the potential losses of S. African corn crop as a result of weather, and the possible lack of available Chinese supplies could spur further buying activity.

U.S. CORN TO USSR

After an absence of almost a year from U.S. corn markets, the USSR purchased 1 million tons for delivery expected to be between March 15 - April 15, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Unconfirmed reports indicate the USSR may have purchased an additional 500,000 tons. USSR trade official said they are willing to meet the terms of the Long-Term Agreement with the U.S. if U.S. commodity prices remain "competitively priced." Based on sketchy reports, the USSR may be committed to buying between 4 and 5 million tons of corn from Argentina, China and Eastern Europe, in addition to the U.S. purchases.

SHARP INCREASE OF U.S. CORN TO JAPAN & KOREA

Due to a shortfall of exportable corn in Argentina, Japanese imports of U.S. corn could increase by as much as 15 pct. or about 1 million 400 thousand tons, which would bring total purchases to 10 million 900 thousand tons during 1986/87. In Korea, traders have bought some 1 million 100 thousand tons of U.S. corn over the past month, bringing total commitments as of Feb. 12 to over 2 million 400 thousand tons for 1986/87, 1 million 400 thousand tons greater than a year ago.

U.S. WHEAT SALES

U.S. wheat shipments during the past month totaled 1 million 600 thousand tons, bringing cumulative shipments for the season to 18 million 800 thousand tons or 9 pct. greater than year-ago shipments. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the leading buyers were Japan, 345,000 tons...Morocco, 263,000 tons...Algeria, 168,000 tons...and Egypt, 115,000 tons. Sales this past month took a dramatic jump to 3 million 100 thousand tons, largely due to purchases by Morocco, 402,000 tons...Poland, 496,000 tons...and Japan, 249,000 tons.

WHEAT PRODUCTION TO FALL IN AUSTRALIA?

The Australian Bureau of Agricultural Economics announced a long-range forecast, predicting a sharp fall in wheat production from 17 million 800 thousand tons in 1986/87 to 13 million 500 thousand in 1989/90, as a result of the low world grain prices leading farmers to shift to livestock and other crops. If the projections materialize, U.S. wheat exports would benefit, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

U.S. WHEAT OPPORTUNITIES

A sale of 18,000 tons of U.S. durum wheat under the Export Enhancement Program to Yugoslavia could turn that country into a regular buyer of U.S. durum, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Yugoslavia is currently estimated to need some 80,000 additional tons of durum during the remainder of 1986/87. Reportedly, Yugoslavian pasta producers sought U.S. durum to improve the quality of their pasta products to boost sales to West European markets. Yugoslavia has the option of buying another 420,000 tons of durum wheat under the Export Enhancement Program.

DEFICIENCY PAYMENTS

Eligible producers of 1986-crop corn and sorghum will receive an estimated \$600 million in deficiency payments. Corn producers will receive about \$515 million and sorghum producers about \$85 million, according to Act'g Sec'y of Agriculture Peter C. Myers. Payments will be made 50 pct. in generic commodity certificates and 50 pct. in cash. For more information, contact the local Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service offices.

LARGE-SCALE FARMS INCREASE

The number of large-scale farms, with annual sales of \$500,000 or more, increased from 11,400 in 1974 to 27,800 in 1982, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Although these farms are only 1.2 pct. of all U.S. farms, they controlled over 10 pct. of the land in farms in 1982 and accounted for nearly 33 pct. of the total value of farm production.

USDA LIFTS CROSS-COMPLIANCE FOR OATS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is lifting the limited cross-compliance requirement for the 1987 crop of oats, according to Dep. Sec'y of Agriculture Peter Myers. Under limited cross compliance, the plantings of other program crops on the farm may not exceed the crop acreage bases of those crops. Myers' announcement permits the planting of oats in excess of the oat acreage base without sacrificing eligibility for other crop program benefits.

FROM OUR
TELEVISION
SERVICE

CURRENT VEGETABLE OUTLOOK...Supplies of fresh market winter vegetables are up from last year, but lower imports of vegetables may raise U.S. grower and retail prices. USDA economist Shannon Hamm talks about the outlook for U.S. vegetables. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (141)

AVIAN INFLUENZA MARKETING SURVEY...Roger Odenweller with USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service describes the nationwide survey of live bird markets and poultry dealers being conducted to check for signs of Avian Influenza, an infectious viral disease of poultry. Marlene Stinson interviews. (142)

STORAGE MOLD IN GRAIN...Barry Jacobsen, University of Illinois, talks about the effects of warm weather on bins of stored grain and precautions farmers should take to ensure grain quality during warm weather. Gary Beaumont interviews. (143)

ARS RESEARCH REPORTS...USDA research scientists have discovered a quick method to measure human body fat; and have determined ways to use bio-control for stored grain pests. Will Pemble reports. (144)

COMPETITION AND CROPS...Fred Welch, University of Illinois, talks about how U.S. farmers might be losing their competitive edge in comparison to other countries as a result of reduced production of crops. Gary Beaumont interviews. (145)



FROM OUR RADIO
SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1553...(Weekly 13½ min documentary) What are Americans eating...a nutritional update. March is National Nutrition Month and Brenda Curtis talks to the administrator of the Human Nutrition Information Service about eating the right foods for good health.

AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1542...(Weekly reel of news features) USDA news highlights; Farm troubles; ASCS news update; Wolf Award; Helping others help themselves.

CONSUMER TIME #1035...(Weekly reel of 2½-3 min features) Consumers and the Farm Bill; The Asian cockroach; Cutting back on chemicals on your lawn; Salad bar science.

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE...Tues, Mar. 10, Weekly crop and weather, World crop production, World oilseed situation, World grain situation, World cotton situation; Thurs, Mar. 12, Sugar & sweeteners; Fri, Mar. 13, Milk production, Cattle on feed. Dial the USDA National News Line 202-488-8358 or 8359. All material changed at 5 p.m. ET each working day.

OFF MIKE

Six days after we had the third snow here this winter (on February 23) the temperature hit 72 degrees! And the snow is gone...again. In the meantime we've been getting all kinds of reports that it's been equally unusual in other parts of the country, especially the mildness of the winter in the midwest. Bob Baker (KOEL, Oelwein, IA) reported they expected to top the 50 degree mark for the first time this winter but that it's been exceptionally mild compared to other years. Also, he said their one-day KOEL AgriExpo set for March 13 is destined to be a biggie. He's scheduled former Secretary of Agriculture John Block, AFB president Dean Kleckner and ASA chief executive officer Ken Bader as speakers. Over 5,000 are expected to attend to hear them and to look over the 60 exhibits ... Kelly Lenz (WIBW, Topeka, KS) reports there was "Standing Room Only" at their one-day WIBW "Farm Profit '87" conference in early February. This was the sixth year WIBW held the event ... And our congratulations to Hugh Robinson (KKOW, Pittsburg, KS). He received the Crawford County Conservation District "Communications Award" in recognition for his outstanding conservation news coverage ... Our Vic Powell (Producer, "USDA Satellite TV News") is off in Colorado and Wyoming producing television news features this week. We tried to convince him that March can be a fun time to visit these states, but he said stories were there and waiting. No doubt we'll hear about trials and tribulations, if any, when he returns ... The following one-liner from Johnny Martin (Ohio Farm Bureau, Columbus) reminds me of what happened recently when the power went off here at the office while I was working on a report on my word processor: "Old computer operators don't die...they just lose their memory."



JAMES L. JOHNSON, Chief, Radio and Television Division

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Radio and Television, Rm. 410-A
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